



## M2M: when “easy” isn’t easy

**By Dan McDuffie**  
CEO, Wyleless

Many mobile operators talk about how easy it is to do business with them and several service providers make bold claims about being the best in this regard, but let’s be clear: there is no quick-and-easy solution when it comes to cellular M2M deployments. Even a simple telematics application deployed in a single country (something like a connected car or a tracking device) will pose unique challenges – even though the application is relatively straightforward and coverage can be serviced by a single operator. And in the complex world of fixed wireless or when dealing with global deployments, the single operator approach just isn’t sufficient. Right now there is no truly “easy” solution to the problem of multi-carrier deployments, and the elusive “global SIM” does not exist.

The challenges vary depending on the application, but one constant is that for most OEMs and large enterprises M2M connectivity is outside of their comfort zone. The reason is that they are procuring a telecommunications service that is being consumed and in some way repackaged and resold onwards to a consumer, be it a person or another business. That means that all of the challenges associated with providing a telecom service apply, including activations and provisioning, rate plan management, billing, remediation, reporting, taxation, collections and more. In essence, the OEM or large enterprise is often becoming a “telecom provider” themselves. Many M2M service providers offer management software that can help with these challenges and some are better than others. It’s vital to choose one that offers a robust, mature system that can handle all of these tasks.

Additionally, there are the challenges of the network infrastructure. M2M connectivity is not usually delivered on the mobile operator’s public network but instead through private APNs. That may mean hosting routers, firewalls, and RADIUS in front of your application servers. If the service requires some level of security, which most do, new challenges arise. Again, look for a service provider that has experience in these areas, and who is prepared to take the time to help you implement the right solutions for your project.

Then there is scalability. In any M2M project, one needs to understand how many devices are likely to be deployed over what period of time, and ensure the scalability of the deployment. For instance, all aspects of the network need to be scrutinized – including things like IP address ranges, service delivery platforms and database servers. And remember, we are not just talking about one’s own infrastructure, but that of every partner in the supply chain that’s supporting the project.

Finally, take all of the above and then add the requirement to use two, three or more mobile operators. Sometimes I’m asked why you would need a multi-carrier network, and I point to several key issues. One is regulation. There are some places where permanently roaming SIMs are simply not tolerated in any significant quantity. Another issue is coverage. No matter how good a mobile operator’s own national network might be, there is no such thing as 100% coverage, and we all know it. Finally, and most importantly for a scalable deployment, is the question of SLAs. If the application is going to involve large deployments in multiple markets, it is unlikely that a roaming operator will be able to fully support SLAs outside of their own network.

The good news is that with the right partner ecosystem of mobile operators, managed services partners, systems integrators, and supply chain management companies, an M2M service provider can help you identify and tackle all these complex challenges efficiently – and make the process *feel* easy! So if somebody tells you it’s easy – look a little closer and make sure they have the tools, experience and resources to meet the challenges of scalable multi-operator deployments. Choose your partner carefully, look for transparency and remember that sometimes it’s easier to admit that it’s not that easy!

### About Wyleless

Wyleless is the leading global M2M managed services provider. Our resilient platform, delivered in partnership with the world’s largest network operators, provides secure, reliable communications with wireless devices in over 120 countries. Powerful management tools offer real-time reporting and control over all devices connected to our network. Wyleless delivers a comprehensive suite of managed services with unrivalled expertise, professional support and competitive pricing. We enable our customers and partners to deploy M2M applications and services faster, cheaper and more effectively.

For more information about Wyleless, please contact:

**Barry Nay, CMO**  
+44 (0)1895 454 674  
[barry.nay@wyleless.com](mailto:barry.nay@wyleless.com)  
[www.wyleless.com](http://www.wyleless.com)  
Twitter: [@wylelessgroup](https://twitter.com/wylelessgroup)